

DIABETES UPDATE

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What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition that arises when the body does not produce or utilize the hormone insulin, as it should. This results in abnormal blood glucose levels. There are two types of diabetes:

Type I is usually diagnosed by age 30 and requires regular injections of insulin to manage.

Type II diabetes usually occurs later in life and is highly linked to obesity. It usually does not require insulin. However, a healthy diet, weight loss and regular exercise will often correct the situation.

Type II Diabetes Can be Prevented

It is important to know that Type II diabetes can often be prevented with healthy lifestyle choices. Here is what you can do to prevent this chronic disease:

- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Get regular physical activity
- Choose low-fat foods
- Do not smoke
- Limit alcoholic beverages

Adopting these healthful behaviors even appears to reduce diabetes risk among those who might be predisposed because of a family history of diabetes. There are compelling reasons to take steps in order to avoid diabetes as it can lead to numerous other health concerns, including heart disease, nerve damage, kidney failure, and poor vision.

Start with small steps

The following recommendations should help you reduce your risk for diabetes:

- Achieve a healthy body weight or, at the very least, maintain your weight.
- Eat a diet that is high in fiber. Good sources are whole-wheat grains and cereals, fruits and vegetables, and dried beans.
- Limit and replace saturated fat from meat, butter and full-fat dairy products with polyunsaturated fats from vegetable sources (peanut, corn, canola oils).
- Choose whole wheat bread and cereals over white or refined breads and cereals.
- Participate in moderate to vigorous activity for 30 minutes each day.
- Stop smoking.
- Research indicates that limited alcohol consumption (1/2 glass of wine or beer or 1/2 ounce of liquor) decreases diabetes risk. However, alcohol consumption has other health risks and if you currently avoid alcohol, this is not reason to start.

Is it Type I or Type II?

- Type I**
- Generally diagnosed by age 20-30
 - Genetic component link
 - Daily insulin required
 - Regular blood glucose checks imperative
 - Increased risk of CHD
 - Characterized by high blood levels of glucose
 - Symptoms include: high blood glucose levels, glycosuria, increased hunger, weight loss, ketones, increased thirst, increased urination
- Type II**
- Generally diagnosed in 30s, 40s and up strong link with overweight
 - Tendency toward overweight may be linked to family history
 - If overweight, weight loss strongly recommended
 - Insulin may not be required
 - Insulin resistance is a concern
 - Symptoms include: high blood glucose levels, hunger, weight gain

Diet Planning Tips

1. Careful distribution of calories: protein, 10-20% calories, carbohydrate, 45-60% of calories, fat, 30% or less of calories
2. Begin careful diet planning in conjunction with an RD working with your physician
3. Practice regular carbohydrate counting (see How To Count Your Carbohydrates)
4. Diet should focus on the following:

Low fat

Critical to reducing already increased risk of coronary heart disease. Important part of weight management. Focus on heart healthy fat—monounsaturated fats.

Cholesterol controlled

Important in helping reduce risk of atherosclerosis.

Calorie controlled

Will help manage weight. Focus on complex carbohydrates, limit simple sugars, choose whole grains.

Terminology

Glucosesugar found in the blood
Hyperglycemia.....high levels of blood glucose
Hypoglycemia.....low levels of blood glucose

Fasting glucose levels

Normal < 110mg/100ml
Impaired glucose tolerance 110-126 mg/100ml
Diabetes..... > 126 mg/100ml